

Message Text

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SUBJECT: INDIAN MEDIA CONTINUES CRITICIZING REPORTED U.S. ARMS
SALES TO PAKISTAN.

BEGIN SUMMARY: DELHI ENGLISH-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS FEB. 13 GAVE
PROMINENT TREATMENT TO DEFENSE MINISTER SWARAN SINGH'S WARNING OF
DANGERS OF U.S. LIFTING ARMS EMBARGO TO PAKISTAN, AND CONCERN OF
SEVERAL MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT OVER THE U.S. ARMS AID TO PINDI.
STATE-RUN ALL INDIA RADIO CARRIED A CRITICAL COMMENTARY. END SUMMARY.

1. COVERAGE OF DEFENSE MINISTER SWARAN SINGH'S REMARKS AT THE
PARLIAMENTARY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE WAS FEATURED IN ALL THE
LEADING DAILIES. THE MOSCOW-LINING PATRIOT ACCORDED IT THE LEAD
NEWS SPOT WITH FRONT-PAGE HEADLINE: "BELLICOSITY, INTRANSIGENCE
WILL GROW" (KICKER) "SWARAN WARNS U.S. AGAINST ARMS TO PINDI."
STORY CONTENT IN OTHER MAJOR NEWSPAPERS REFLECTED THEIR HEADLINES:
"ARMS FOR PINDI TO HARM DETENTE" (TIMES OF INDIA), AND "U.S.
ARMS WILL MAKE PAKISTAN 'INTRANSIGENT' "(HINDUSTAN TIMES).

2. NEWS ACCOUNTS SAID THE DEFENSE MINISTER DESCRIBED THE REPORTED
U.S. MOVE A "GRAVE ERROR" AND A "FATAL STEP" WHICH WILL MAKE PAKI-
STAN "INTRANSIGENT AND BELLICOSE" AND HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT
WASHINGTON IS NOT CONTEMPLATING ANOTHER ONE-TIME EXCEPTION.

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3. REPORTAGE MENTIONED THAT THE MINISTER IS BELIEVED TO HAVE EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN OVER THE STATEMENTS BY PRESIDENT FORD, DR. KISSINGER AND THE U.S. DEFENSE SECRETARY ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF USE OF FORCE IN CASE THE USA FELT "STRANGULATED" BY THE OIL SQUEEZE.

4. THE TIMES OF INDIA FRONT-PAGED A THREE-COLUMN CARTOON WHICH SHOWED BHUTTO PHONING THE WHITE HOUSE SAYING, "THERE IS A THREAT TO OUR DEMOCRACY NOT ONLY FROM OUTSIDE, AS I WAS SAYING, BUT FROM INSIDE TOO, GERALD." HE IS SHOWN HOLDING A KEY TO A ROOM IN WHICH HE HAS LOCKED HIMSELF. OPPOSITION MEMBERS ARE OVERHEATING HIS CONVERSATION THROUGH WIRED WINDOWS.

5. EQUALLY PROMINENT COVERAGE WAS GIVEN BY THE DELHI DAILIES TO STATEMENTS OF SEVERAL MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AT THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ATTACHED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY URGING THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT TO GO IN FOR NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS IF AMERICA AGREED TO RESUME ARMS AID TO PAKISTAN. THE INDIAN EXPRESS LED FRONT PAGE WITH THIS STORY UNDER THREE COLUMN HEAD: "U.S. ARMS SUPPLY TO PAKISTAN MAY COMPEL INDIA TO GO NUCLEAR."

6. COVERAGE ADDED THAT THE MINISTER FOR ENERGY K.C. PANT WHO PRESIDED OVER THE MEETING REPORTEDLY COUNSELLED MEMBERS TO RAISE THE ISSUE ON THE FLOOR OF THE PARLIAMENT AS THE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION CANNOT TAKE A DECISION ON MATTERS INVOLVING DIPLOMACY. THEY ALSO QUOTED THE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN H.N. SETHNA'S ASSURANCE TO MEMBERS THAT PAKISTAN WOULD TAKE ABOUT EIGHT TO NINE YEARS TO DEVELOP AN ATOMIC DEVICE FOR EXPLOSION.

7. IN A CRITICAL COMMENTARY ON THE ALL INDIA RADIO (GENERAL OVERSEAS SERVICE), N.S. BEDI ASSERTED THAT INDUCTION OF U.S. "MODERN LETHAL WEAPONS" TO PAKISTAN WILL "EMBOLDEN THE FORCES OF CONFLICT AND DISCORD IN THE REGION." HE DECLARED THAT THE U.S. MOVE IS CONTRARY TO PUBLIC ASSURANCES WASHINGTON HAD GIVEN INDIA.

"THE AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION IS WELL AWARE OF THE FACT THAT ITS POLICY OF GIVING WEAPONS TO PAKISTAN HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MAIN NEGATIVE FACTORS IN INDO-U.S. RELATIONS." IN CONCLUSION, HE URGED:
"IF WASHINGTON IS REALLY INTERESTED IN SEEING THE INDIAN SUB-CONTINENT A REGION OF LASTING PEACE AND HAVING A POSITIVE AND MATURE RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA, IT MUST RECONSIDER IT
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POLICY BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE."SCHNEIDER

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